VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES

In the specification:

Sentence beginning on page 1, line 2 has been amended as follows:

The present invention [generally] relates to waterfowl decoy devices, and in its preferred embodiments more specifically relates to waterfowl decoy devices with positive buoyancy and interchangeable appendages to selectively provide propulsion, splashing action, and wing movement to simulate the appearance of live waterfowl.

Paragraph beginning on page 2, line 22 has been amended as follows:

There remains a need for decoy apparatus that produces wing and/or paddle movement to realistically simulate the appearance of live waterfowl, that allows the same decoy body and drive mechanism to be used to produce a variety of movements, that will not sink during use, and that is useable as both a floating decoy and as a pole mounted decoy.

Paragraph beginning on page 3, line 5 has been amended as follows:

The present invention provides a waterfowl decoy that addresses and overcomes the deficiencies and problems of the prior art by producing movement of wing and/or paddle appendages associated with the decoy that realistically simulates live waterfowl wing movement providing propulsion[,] and splashing of the water around the decoy, and [by] providing a decoy with positive buoyancy to eliminate the problem of water ingress and sinking experienced with some prior art decoys. The movement exhibited by the decoy of the present invention is produced by a drive apparatus that is simple in structure and operation, inexpensive to produce, and easy to install in a decoy body. The optional simultaneous movement and splashing actions of the decoy are produced by the same drive apparatus using attachable wing and/or foot appendages. One embodiment of the [The] decoy of the invention is designed to avoid retention of water in the body of the decoy and to maintain positive buoyancy through the use of a removable buoyant base made from a cell foam plastic material. Another embodiment disclosed in the Figures allows the decoy to be pole mounted through a pole insert in the base of the decoy. The decoy may he readily mounted on a vertical pole, so that the decoy may be used as a floating decoy or as a pole mounted decoy without alteration.

Paragraph beginning on page 3, line 16 has been amended as follows:

The present invention utilizes a decoy body, generally comprising a body with a hollow interior, a top, two opposing sides, a head end, and a tail end. In the preferred embodiment a head and neck is rotatably mounted at the head end of the decoy or offset to either side of the axis. The decoy body is formed as a shell, with a fully open bottom [provide] providing access to the hollow interior for installation of the drive assembly and for operation of the drive assembly. A removable generally rigid buoyant base is disposed within the body shell at the lower edges thereof to loosely close the majority of the bottom opening, leaving an opening into the interior between the rear of the base and the tail of the decoy. The base is sufficiently buoyant to support the entire decoy structure and prevent it from sinking, and the opening between the base and the tail allows any water entering the body to [escape] freely drain. The base includes a pole aperture extending fully through the base for the insertion of a pole when the decoy is to be used as a pole mounted decoy. The decoy body [is] also [provided with] has a pair of shaft apertures formed in the opposing sides of the body through which drive shafts extend. The invention can also be used with a more conventional hollow body with an access portal cut into the top of the decoy body.

Paragraph beginning at page 4, line 8 has been amended as follows:

The drive assembly of the preferred embodiment of the present invention includes a pair of drive [means] assemblies, preferably battery powered electric motors, each of which drives a rotary shaft that extends through one of the shaft apertures in the sides of the body of the decoy and to which an appendage assembly is attached. In the preferred embodiment the output shaft at each motor comprises the drive shaft, and each motor is oriented in the hollow interior of the body with the drive shaft extending toward the adjacent side of the body and through the shaft aperture therein, so that the drive shafts are generally parallel to the surface of the water in which the decoy will float and perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the decoy. The shaft apertures are positioned in the sides of the body and the drive [means] assemblies are positioned in the hollow interior of the body, so that the drive shafts are disposed a distance above the surface of the water when the decoy is floating thereon. An appendage assembly, either wing, paddle, or a combination of one or the other, is connected to each drive shaft on the exterior of the decoy body so that rotation of the drive shaft will cause rotation of the appendage assembly and the associated wing and/or paddle appendages.

Paragraph beginning at page 5, line 9 has been amended as follows:

A variety of appendage assemblies may he interchangeably and separably used within the scope of the present invention, and in the preferred embodiment at least a pair of paddle wheel assemblies and a pair of [rotating] wing assemblies are provided. Those assemblies may he used individually, separately, or [both may be connected to a drive shaft to operate in unison] in combination on one or more separate assemblies on the same or separate drive shafts. A

windmill wing assembly may also be provided, for use with the decoy mounted on a pole. Each of these appendage assemblies includes a hub, [component] adapted to be connected to a drive shaft [of the drive assembly of] extending from the decoy, with paddle structures or wing structures[, respectively,] connected to the hub. With all but the windmill wing assembly, the decoy may he operated while floating on a body of water or may be mounted on a pole on land or above the surface of the water. Because of the range of movement of the wings of the windmill wing assembly and the need for clearance below the decoy, the windmill wing embodiment is operated with the decoy mounted on a pole. When [the] a paddle wheel assembly is used, rotation of the [paddles] paddle structures propels the decoy along the surface of the water and simultaneously splashes water toward the tail of the decoy. The wing assembly is intended to visually mimic flapping wings, and the combination of a wing and paddle assembly causes considerable motion and splashing on the surface of the water. The direction of travel can be further controlled and influenced by changing the orientation of the rotatable head and neck.

Sentence beginning page 6, line 1 has been amended as follows:

The structure and features of the preferred and various alternative embodiments of the invention are disclosed [in detail] with reference to the accompanying drawing figures.

Sentence beginning page 7, line 8 has been amended as follows:

With reference to the drawing figures, the preferred embodiment of the decoy of the invention generally includes a hollow decoy body shell 1, a buoyant base 2, a drive assembly 3, and a pair of appendage assemblies 4.

Paragraph beginning at page 7, line 11 has been amended as follows:

The apparatus of the invention utilizes a waterfowl decoy body formed as a shell with a hollow interior and a fully open bottom. Body 1 includes a top 5, opposing sides 6, a head end or forward end 7, and a tail end 8. The body shell has a lower edge 9 at the open bottom. A shaft aperture 10 is provided in each side 6 of the body, near the midpoint thereof to receive a drive shaft. Buoyant base 2 is removably disposed at the bottom of the body shell, with its sides generally adjacent to lower edge 9 at the forward end and sides of the body. Base 2 extends through the majority of the length of the body from the forward end to the tail, but ends short of the tail to leave an opening into the interior of the body above the base at the tail end of the body. Base 2 is formed in a planar configuration, preferably of a relatively rigid, highly buoyant closed cell foam material. In another embodiment, the body 1 has a conventional closed bottom with a access portal or flap cut through the top 5 of the decoy body 1.

Sentence beginning page 8, line 1 has been amended as follows:

Each motor 11, which is preferably sealed for water resistance, includes an output shaft, which [is caused to rotate] rotates when electrical power is applied to the motor.

Sentence beginning page 9, line 4 has been amended as follows:

It should be understood that [the] while the disclosed motor rotational speed and operating voltage ranges are preferred, the invention is not limited to those ranges, and other ranges and even alternative drive means may be used within the scope of the invention.

Sentence beginning page 9, line 17 has been amended as follows:

Preferred appendage assemblies include a paddle wheel or foot assembly 19 and a rotating wing assembly 20, which may be used with the decoy floating on the surface of a body of water or mounted on a pole, and a windmill wing assembly 21, which may be used with the decoy mounted on a pole.

Paragraph beginning at page 9, line 21 has been amended as follows:

In the preferred embodiment, each [the] paddle wheel assembly 19, illustrated in Figure 10, includes a hub 22 with a central hub aperture 23 to receive a drive shaft. Connection [means,] is preferably an adjustable set screw 24 [is provided] in hub 22 to selectively grip a drive shaft 16 and removably connect the paddle appendage assembly 19 to the drive shaft. Two paddles 25 are connected in opposing relation to each other and extend outwardly from the hub in generally perpendicular relation to the axis of the hub aperture 23. It should be understood that while the two paddle configuration is preferred, three or more paddles, or a single paddle, could he used if desired. In the preferred embodiment, the paddles 25 are integrally formed as a single piece, which is connected to the hub 22. The end of the paddles 25 are paddle structures that may be (1) flat, elongated appendages, (2) flat, oval-shaped appendages, or (3) flat, circular appendages. These structures may also be integrated into the paddle 25 itself or may be removable structures. Combinations of wing and different foot paddles may be used, and even used alternatively, on different moving wing or paddle struts or axles of the decoy. [Each paddle is of sufficient length that a portion of the paddle will extend below the surface of the water when the appendage assemblies are connected to respective drive shafts and with the decoy floating on the water.] Each paddle 25, whether elongated, oval, or circular, is of sufficient length such that a portion of the paddle structure will extend below the surface of the water when the appendage assembly 19 is connected to and rotated by the drive shafts 16 with the decoy 1 floating on the water surface. When the drive [means] motor 11 is activated the hubs [are caused to] 22 rotate, driving the paddles 25 through the water and propelling the decoy 1 along the

surface of the water. In addition to propelling the decoy 1 in the water, the [movement] rotation of the paddles 25 through the water causes water to be splashed toward the rear of the decoy as long as the drive [means] motor 11 is activated, providing a further attractive aspect to the decoy. In the preferred embodiment, each paddle wheel assembly 19 includes an extension shaft 26, extending outwardly in [opposed] coaxial alignment with the hub aperture 23, to facilitate attachment of [rotating] a wing [assemblies] assembly 20 in combination with the paddle wheel [assemblies] assembly 19. The paddles 25 and associated hub 22 may also be separately formed and connected in any convenient manner. The shaft 16 may extend completely through the body of the hub 22 so that a wing assembly 20 may be attached. A foot paddle 25 may alternatively be coupled to, or integrated with, any one of the hubs 22.

Paragraph beginning at page 10, line 17 has been amended as follows:

Each rotating wing assembly 20, shown in Figure 10, includes a hub 27 with a hub aperture 28 and set screw 29 for connection of the hub 27 to a drive shaft 16 or to an extension shaft 26. A single wing 30 connected to its hub 27 and extending outwardly therefrom with the longitudinal axis of the wing 30 generally parallel to the axis of hub aperture 28 and shaft 16 or shaft extension 26. In the preferred embodiment, each wing 30 comprises an [elongate] elongated generally planar body formed with the general configuration and appearance of a waterfowl wing. Each wing 30 is integrally formed with its associated hub 27, but it should be understood that the wings 30 and hubs 27 may be separately formed and separately connected in any convenient manner. The wing 30 and paddle 25 appendages may also be part of a single hub 22 or separately connected upon a drive shaft 16 using two hubs 22 and 27. A foot paddle 25 may alternatively be coupled to, or integrated with, any one of the hubs 22. When a pair of the rotating wing appendage assemblies [is] 30 connected to the drive shafts 16 extending from the body of the decoy and the drive [means is] motors 11 are activated, the wings [are caused to] 30 rotate around their longitudinal axes and mimic the appearance of a live bird flapping its wings. The flapping appearance may be enhanced by coloring one side of each wing 30 a light color and the opposite side a dark color[, if desired]. The width of wing 30 is preferably less than twice the distance from the drive shafts 16 extending from the body of the decoy to the surface of the water on which the decoy is placed to float, so that as wings 30 [are caused to] rotate [by activation of the drive means] the edges of the wings 30 remain above the surface of the water. However, if desired, the width of the wings may he selected so that a portion of the wing will [move through] enter the water as the wing rotates and splash water from the surface as each edge of the wing leaves the water.

Paragraph beginning at page 11, line 12 has been amended as follows:

As noted above, the paddle wheel assemblies 19 and the rotating wing assemblies 20 may be used separately, [as illustrated in Figures 5 and 3, respectively,] or [may be used] in combination, [as shown in Figure 4] in any convenient manner as desired. When used separately the hub 22 or 27 of each appendage assembly 19 or 30 is connected to a drive shaft 16, with the shaft extending into the hub aperture 23 or 28, and the set [screw is] screws 24 or 29 tightened to

retain the [assembly] two separate assemblies in place. When used in combination, the paddle wheel assemblies 19 are connected directly to drive shafts 16 and the rotating wing assemblies 20 are connected to the paddle wheel assemblies 19, by connecting hubs 27 to shaft extensions 26. Alternatively, the shaft 16 can extend completely through the hub 22 so that both a paddle assembly 19 or wing assembly 20 can be attached to shaft 16, or any combination of both paddle assembly 19 and wing assembly 20 may be so attached. Upon activation of the drive [means] motor 11 the paddles and wings [are caused to] rotate together or in a combination of the movements described above, propelling the decoy along the surface of the water, splashing water around the decoy, and mimicking the appearance of flapping wings and paddling feet. When the decoy is prepared for use with the desired appendage assemblies attached, the drive [means] motor 11 is activated and the decoy is placed in the water. In another embodiment, a wing assembly 20 and a paddle assembly 19 could be placed on separate drive shafts or moving struts to mimic waterfowl movement and water splashing. An anchor tab 31 is provided in the preferred embodiment so that the decoy can be anchored with an anchor line of desired length to restrain its range of movement and facilitate retrieval. Alternatively, the decoy may be mounted on a pole to elevate it above the surface of the water or position it on land, by inserting one end of [the] a mounting pole through an aperture 32 in base 2 and into aligned aperture 17 in mounting bracket 15, where it is frictionally retained by pole tab retainer tab 18. If the decoy is to he mounted on a pole for use, windmill wing assemblies may be connected to drive shafts 16, if desired, to provide [a] an alternative form of motion.

Paragraph beginning at page 12, line 12 has been amended as follows:

Like the other two appendage assemblies, each windmill wing assembly of Figure 12 includes a hub 33, with a central aperture 34 and a set screw 35, and also includes two wings 36. [However, unlike] Unlike the rotating wing assembly 20, the windmill wing assembly includes a pair of wings 36, connected [in opposed relation to] opposite to each other on hub 33 with their longitudinal axes perpendicular to the axis of aperture 34. Since wings 36 extend outwardly from the axis of rotation, they rotate in a windmill fashion.